

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Department of Criminal Justice Services

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GOVERNOR KAINE ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR A STATE VICTIM ASSISTANCE ACADEMY

(Richmond)—Governor Timothy M. Kaine today announced plans for a State Victim Assistance Academy, a week-long, academically based, high-quality course on victimology, victims' rights, and victim services. The Academy will meet the training needs of a broad range of victim service providers and allied professionals.

The Academy, which is supported by a planning grant from the federal Office for Victims of Crime, is being developed through a unique multidisciplinary partnership including the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), the University of Richmond, Virginia Commonwealth University, criminal justice officials, victim advocacy organizations and crime victims. The Academy will be supported, in part, by continuing federal grants.

“This Academy will expand and improve the training provided to victim advocates and criminal justice professionals, thereby enhancing the services received by crime victims throughout the Commonwealth, whether they are from urban, suburban, or rural areas,” said DCJS Director Leonard G. Cooke.

It is anticipated that the first course will be held on the University of Richmond campus during the summer of 2008. The Academy will be modeled after the National Victim Assistance Academy, yet the curriculum will be tailored to reflect the needs and laws of Virginia. The Academy's charter and curriculum will be developed by a planning committee, which will have extensive representation from victim advocacy organizations, the law enforcement community, prosecutors, state agencies, academia, and victims of crime. The faculty will include representatives from the planning committee. Attached is a listing of the planning committee participants.

“We look forward to congratulating our future graduates,” Governor Kaine, “and challenging them to put what they have mastered to good use by improving the quality of services provided to crime victims.”

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State Victim Assistance Academy Planning Committee Representatives

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (lead agency)
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Mothers Against Drunk Driving (Virginia Chapter)
National Crime Victim Bar Association
The Office of the Attorney General of Virginia
The Office of the United States Attorney General
University of Richmond
Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police
Virginia Coalition for the Prevention of Elder Abuse
Virginia Commonwealth University
Virginia Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund
Virginia Department of Corrections
Virginia Department of Health
Virginia Department of Social Services
Virginia Network for Victims and Witnesses of Crime, Inc.
Virginia Parole Board
Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance
Virginia Sheriffs' Association
Virginia State Police

There will also be representatives on the planning committee from victim/witness programs, sexual assault crisis centers, domestic violence programs, crime victims, victim advocacy coalitions, local prosecutors and law enforcement academies in Virginia.